SAN FRANCISCO ART ASSOCIATION BULLETIN
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27

# REFREGIER MURALS

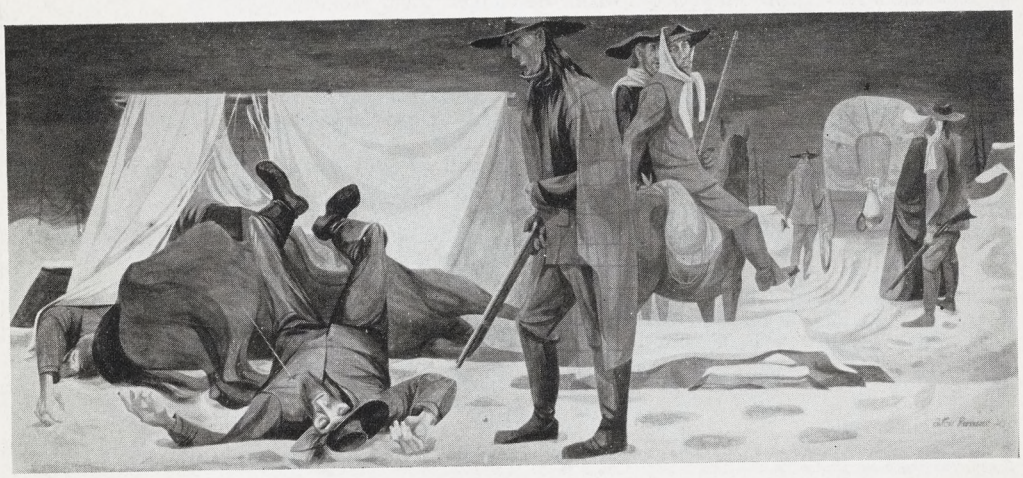
A significant chapter of San Francisco's art history is being written at this moment by Anton Refregier on the walls of the city's Rincon Hill Post Office. For the winner of the national competition for twenty-nine mural decorations has been at work on the scaffold, along with assisting artist Robert McChesney, since late July. Five years have been spent in research and in the preparation of the cartoons for the murals. The artist has chosen to present the fabulous history of the city of St. Francis against the equally epic story of the settling and building of the Far West. Although jeopardized by certain elements who wanted the project stopped during the war, Refregier has now been able, through the active support of art and civic-minded individuals, to go ahead with the murals and, at this date, has completed ten panels in casein tempera.



Photograph by Ray Piercy, California School of Fine Arts.

Refregier sees the dualism of the city's history first in the struggle of men against nature and later in the social conflicts of the growing community. The murals completed up to now tell the story of Indian life before the advent of the white man; the coming of the British, Spanish and Russians and their impact on the American wilderness; the overland trek of hundreds of thousands and the human suffering involved in opening up the West; the printing of the first newspaper; the proclaiming of the short-lived California Republic; and the turbulent chapter in California's history—Gold.

In murals still to be completed Refregier will depict the conflict between groups favoring the North or South during the Civil War; the sand-lot riots; the growing cultural life of the community as exemplified by the lives of Bret Harte, Jack London, Luther Burbank, Hubert Howe Bancroft, Lola Montez and others; the earthquake and fire of '06; the building of the Golden Gate Bridge; and, finally, the conference which saw the birth of the United Nations and which Refregier covered as artist-correspondent for *Fortune* magazine.





Photograph by Emerson Knight.

The statue of St. Therese, known popularly as "The Little Flower," was completed this fall by *Ruth Cravath,* artist member of the Association and instructor at the California School of Fine Arts. The sculpture of the French saint now stands in the patio of the new St. Basil's Church in Vallejo. It was cut directly from pink Tennessee marble and is approximately five feet high. A member of the cloistered Carmelite order, St. Therese died in 1897 at the age of 24; she was canonized in 1925.

Donor of the statue is Mr. Paul A. Ryan, member of the San Francisco Art Commission. Miss Cravath executed the work in Ralph Stackpole's stoneyard in San Francisco, from which the finished statue was moved to Vallejo for dedication on St. Therese's Feast Day, October 3, at the conclusion of a novena to the saint.

## TIMOTHY L. PFLUEGER

### 1892-1946

With the untimely death of Timothy L. Pflueger on November 20, 1946, the artists of California lost a revered, a cherished and a most helpful friend. His passing has left a void that is a cause of deep personal sorrow to countless persons in all branches of art activity throughout California. Nowhere is this loss and sorrow felt more keenly than by the Board of Directors and the members of the San Francisco Art Association and by the faculty and the student body of the California School of Fine Arts.

Timothy L. Pflueger was a member of the San Francisco Art Association from 1929, President of the Association from 1932 to 1937 and a member of its Board of Directors from 1930 until his death. By his constant active interest in the Association and its School he contributed greatly to their development and progress.

Timothy L. Pflueger, born and educated in San Francisco, became an architect, a member of the A.I.A., a designer of notable buildings, a leading member of his profession on the Pacific Coast. Mindful of his own early struggles to achieve, he devoted much time and effort to the assistance of young people struggling for development in creative fields. He found a major channel for his interest and his efforts in the Art Association and its School.

Timothy L. Pflueger assisted the Association and its School in ways too numerous to mention. For one thing, he was one of the stronger inspiring and guiding spirits behind the Association's famous Parilias.

It is our desire to express here for the Board of Directors and the members of the San Francisco Art Association and for the faculty and the student body of the California School of Fine Arts, our deep sense of personal loss in the passing of Timothy L. Pflueger and to tender the heartfelt sympathy of us all to the bereaved mother and brothers of our late lamented associate, benefactor and friend.

Meanwhile, the San Francisco Art Association has in contemplation a permanent memorial to be developed by the Association to the memory of Timothy L. Pflueger.

SAN FRANCISCO ART ASSOCIATION
ELDRIDGE T. SPENCER, *President*

## SAN FRANCISCO AND THE NEW YORK MARKET

Since the publication of Mr. Vidar's letter in the November issue of the *Bulletin,* we have given a good deal of thought to his statement, "New York is hardly aware that there are any artists in San Francisco." With this in mind we contacted Rose Pauson, artist member of the Association who recently returned from a trip to New York, in order to get her opinion on the reception art from this region is receiving in the Eastern center. Miss Pauson, who saw numerous exhibitions and visited with several former colleagues during her stay, replied that the work of artist-craftsmen of California, and particularly those of the Bay Area, is being exhibited to great advantage and is meeting with considerable success in the East. According to Miss Pauson, when it comes to the decorative arts—or more exactly, the mediums in which the artist-craftsman is active, ceramics, jewelry, textiles, etc., here California is very much "on the map." Everywhere she went — Marshall Field's in Chicago, numerous New York shops and centers (America House, for example) — the works of these local artist-craftsmen are being shown and sold. This work is considered not only as fine as that produced in the East, but in many instances far superior. Incidentally, Miss Pauson was asked by America House to contact other West Coast artist-craftsmen not already represented in the East to submit designs and finished work to them.

On the other hand, Miss Pauson found that paintings and sculpture by local artists were less in evidence. For the most part, she feels that the painters from the Bay Area who are well known in New York are those who have made their home there for a number of years, although retaining certain ties with the West. That several artists from the West Coast are being represented regularly in eastern exhibitions is well established. Among familiar names are John Ferren, Mark Rothko, C. S. Price and Clyfford Still of Oregon, Mark Tobey, Morris Graves and Darrel Austin of Washington, and San Francisco's Charles Howard, John Atherton and Dong Kingman, although it is true that of these three only Kingman received recognition in his home city before being granted New York showings. Southern Californians Fletcher Martin, Barse Miller, Millard Sheets, Henry Lee McFee, Phil Paradise and MacDonald-Wright are well known to the Eastern art scene.

Thanks to the efforts of museum directors such as Bartlett Hayes of the Addison Gallery, national shows bring together the best from the entire country, with contributions from the West Coast more than "holding their own" among illustrious Eastern company. (See Mr. Hayes' article in the November *Bulletin.*) In reviewing the recent exhibition of prize-winning paintings at the Addison Gallery, Aline B. Louchheim in the *Art News* for October throws the spotlight on this section of the country, stating that "West Coast prize winners are easy to spot . . . Somehow, with the concentration on clearly defined, consciously avant-garde styles, one feels that the shortest distance from New York's Fifty-third Street is to California. Thus from the San Francisco Museum, the California Palace of Legion of Honor, and the Pasadena Art Institute come the only nonobjective paintings." So we see that whenever the work of "local" painters is seen in national shows, it elicits immediate attention. Thus, too, we find that it is the museums which are instrumental in placing the work of Western artists before the Eastern critics.

Summing up, we might conclude that whatever the dearth of West Coast, or more specifically, Bay Area painting in the East—this is due not so much to the lack of opportunity for Western artists to show their work, but to a certain reticence or disinterestedness on the part of many artists themselves.

As members of an Association seeking to promote the visual arts in this community, we are equally concerned with finding ways in which this art may reach an ever-growing public. With this in mind, it might be well to examine carefully the relation of the local artist to the national art scene, and from such examination, to try to determine methods whereby more of our artists who so desire may find a less local market.

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***The Association wishes its members and friends a Very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year***



CALIFORNIA HILLS, Rinaldo Cuneo—S. F. A. A. Purchase Prize, 1935. Collection San Francisco Museum of Art.

## CUNEO AND PIAZZONI MEMORIAL EXHIBITIONS

A group of landscapes by the late Gottardo Piazzoni and Rinaldo Cuneo, former active artist members of the Association, has been selected by the Lucien Labaudt Art Gallery for a special memorial showing during the Christmas month. Piazzoni, who was born in Switzerland, came to California as a youth and received his art training at the Mark Hopkins Institute, forerunner of the California School of Fine Arts. He was one of the founders of the California Society of Etchers, a frequent exhibitor to local and national shows, and for many years an instructor at his former alma mater.

Cuneo, a native San Franciscan, traveled extensively throughout the West in search of paintable material, returning to his Montgomery Street studio to work from his sketches. The canvases of this artist have not been shown in exhibition form for the past seven years. Concurrently with the Labaudt Gallery showing, the Fenner Fuller Galleries in Oakland are exhibiting a small group of his paintings.

## 1947 ANNUALS

Dates for the first two Art Association Annuals for the new year have been set and the juries chosen. First for '47 is the 11th Annual Drawing and Print Exhibition to be held from February 13 to March 9. Headed by Chairman Ray Boynton, the Jury of Selection will include Franz Bergmann, Robert McChesney, Hanne-Lore Nepote and Walter Landor, with Michael Goodman and Tammis Keefe as alternates. The Jury of Awards is composed of Messrs. Boynton, Bergmann and McChesney.

Dates announced for the 11th Watercolor Annual are March 13 to April 13. Alexander Nepote has been elected chairman of the Jury of Selection whose other members will be Glenn Wessels, Charles Lindstrom, Emmy Lou Packard and Edgar Dorsey Taylor; alternates are Dorothy Grover and Hassel Smith. Nepote, Wessels and Lindstrom constitute the Jury of Awards.

Dates for submission of entries will appear in subsequent issues of the *Bulletin.*

## GIFTS TO LIBRARY

During the past month several fine periodicals and photographs have come into the possession of the Anne Bremer Memorial Library. John Howell, well known San Francisco bookseller, has presented the Library with a rare folio of photos by Alvin Langdon Coburn entitled *New York.*

From the *Services du Conseiller Culturel, Ambassade de France,* in New York City has come a handsome gift of recent French art and fashion periodicals.

A large portfolio of photographs by Ansel Adams of the murals executed by Maurice Sterne for the Library of the Department of Justice Building, Washington, D. C., was the joint gift of the artist and the photographer. Both the Art Association and the California School of Fine Arts wish to say "many thanks" to these generous donors for contributing so substantially to the Library's growing collections.

## WHERE ARE MEMBERS EXHIBITING?

*ARTISTS' GUILD GALLERY*
Retrospective Graphic Show by Giacomo Patri — through December

*CITY OF PARIS, ROTUNDA GALLERY*
Paintings and Sculpture by Caroline Martin, Raymond Puccinelli and Zourab Tchkotoua — through January 4

*DE YOUNG MUSEUM*
Ceramics by Association of S. F. Potters — through December

*LUCIEN LABAUDT GALLERY*
Group Showing of Bay Region Artists — through December

*SAN FRANCISCO MUSEUM OF ART*
Selections from Albert M. Bender Collection — through January 14

## CHRISTMAS GIFT—RENTAL GALLERY

Mrs. Drew Chidester, chairman of the Rental Gallery at the San Francisco Museum of Art, announces that a Christmas Party for lenders and participating artists will be held on Tuesday, December 17, from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. at the museum. Through the generosity of sponsors James L. Caruth, Virgil Dardi, Chalmers Graham, Frank Runyan and Karl Weber some lucky lender will receive the painting or sculpture then in his temporary custody as a permanent gift. Judge Theresa Meikle will draw the name of the Christmas prize winner. Only those Association and Museum members whose rental on a work of art does not expire before December 25 will be eligible for the prize.

Over one hundred rental transactions have been completed during the past two months, resulting in the sale of eight paintings. Several art works appearing in the recent 66th Annual have been added to the rental collection according to William Gaw, chairman of the Artists' Committee.

Before closing, we might add that, much to our disappointment, we learned that Art Association members as a whole have failed to take advantage of the excellent opportunities offered by the Museum Rental Plan. So once more we'd like to remind all lay members that the privilege of renting contemporary works by Bay Region painters, sculptors and designers is being extended only to you and to members of the San Francisco Museum. We suggest that you visit the recently redecorated rental galleries during the holiday season and become acquainted with this new, yet already successful venture.

## TOUR POSTPONED

Mrs. Henry F. Dutton, chairman of the Women's Auxiliary, has asked us to notify Association members of the postponement of the Auxiliary Tour until Spring, 1947. Exact date will be announced later.

*It is with deep regret that we note the passing of Maynard Dixon at his Tucson, Arizona, home on November 13 of this year. Mr. Dixon was for many years a member of the Art Association and for a short time an instructor at the California School of Fine Arts. He achieved notable success throughout the country as a painter of the Far West.*

The *Bulletin* is published monthly by the San Francisco Art Association *Editor,* DOROTHY N. COLODNY.

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